VIDEO POKER GAMES WITH

INCREASING PAYOUT AWARDS

1 **Cross-reference to Related Application**

2 This application is based on and claims the benefit of

3 U.S. Provisional Application Serial No. 60/319388, filed July

4 10, 2002, entitled "Video Poker Games with Increasing Payout

5 Awards".

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7 This application relates to a method of playing video

8 poker and more particularly to a method of playing video

9 poker in which certain payouts in the pay table are randomly

10 increased. Any suitable random occurrence may be used to

11 increase these payouts, but the preferred manner is to use

12 various colored decks of playing cards to indicate that the

13 designated payouts have been changed.

14

15 **Background of the Invention**

16 A well known game of chance offered to players in most

1   gaming casinos is video draw poker. Video draw poker is

2   traditionally played in a single hand format. After making a

3   wager, the player is dealt five cards face up. The player

4   selects which cards, if any, the player wishes to hold, the

5   unheld cards are discarded and replacement cards are dealt

6   for the discarded cards. The final five card hand is

7   analyzed to determine its poker hand ranking and the player

8   is paid for winning poker hand rankings based on the amount

9   of the player§s wager. A pay table is displayed to the player

10 showing the amounts that the player can win based on the

11 poker hand ranking achieved by the player and the amount

12 wagered by the player.

13   U.S. Patent No. 5823873 (Moody) (the disclosure of which

14 is incorporated herein by this reference) describes TRIPLE

15 PLAY DRAW POKER® which is an electronic video gaming machine

16 and method in which the player may play multiple hands at the

17 same time. In the most successful commercial version of

18 TRIPLE PLAY DRAW POKER®, the player makes a wager for each of

19 three separate hands to be played by the player. One hand of

20 five cards is dealt all face up. The player selects none,

1 one or more of the face up cards from the first hand as cards

2 to be held. The cards that are held are reused from the

3 first hand into all of the other hands. Replacement cards

4 for the non-selected cards are dealt into the first hand and

5 additional cards are then dealt to the first hand, if needed,

6 so that the first hand has five cards. Additional cards are

7 also dealt to all of the other hands so that each hand is a

8 five card hand. The poker hand ranking of each five card hand

9 is determined row by row. The player is then paid for any

10 winning poker hands based on a pay table and the amount of

11 the player's wager.

12   Another multiple hand poker game is disclosed in U.S.

13 Patent Number 6050568 (Hachquet) and U.S. Patent Number

14 6135883 (Hachquet), the disclosure of each of these patents

15 being incorporated herein. In the method of play disclosed

16 in the Hachquet patents, a player is dealt two identical

17 poker hands. The player may discard and draw replacement

18 cards independently in each hand so that the player may, if

19 he were so inclined, employ a different hold strategy for

20 each hand. Winning hands will receive a payout according to

1   a pay table.

2   The casino video poker market is very competitive and

3 gaming establishments are continuously looking for new and

4 exciting forms of video poker to attract and keep players.

5 It is desirable to offer the player the opportunity to

6 receive larger payouts in order to encourage the players to

7 play the video poker gaming machines.

8   It is an object of the present invention to provide

9 players with higher payouts on a random basis for certain

10 winning hand combinations. This can be accomplished by

11 providing an indicator on a random basis that shows the

12 player that certain winning combinations have increased

13 payouts for that particular hand. The indicator is randomly

14 activated from hand to hand so that the payouts for certain

15 winning combinations are changed constantly.

16   It is a further object of the present invention to use

17 colors as the indicator. For example, the cards used in

18 video poker can be designated with colors, such as red, white

19 or blue, that correspond to different payouts for different

20 winning hand combinations.

1   It is a feature of the present invention to provide the

2 player with changing winning payouts for certain winning hand

3 combinations. The changing payouts are displayed on a random

4 basis prior to the play of each hand. This feature can be

5 applied to both single hand poker games and multiple hand

6 poker games.

7   It is an advantage of the present invention that the

8 player will have the opportunity to win larger payouts on a

9 random basis. This adds additional excitement to the play of

10 video poker by combining the skill aspects of video poker

11 with the chance aspects of the randomly changing values for

12 certain winning poker hand.

13   Other objects, features and advantages of the present

14 invention will become apparent from a consideration of the

15 following detailed description.

16

17   **Summary of the Invention**

18   Players are provided with higher payouts on a random

19 basis for certain winning hand combinations that occur during

20 the play of video poker.   This can be accomplished by

1   providing an indicator on a random basis that shows the

2   player that certain winning combinations have increased

3   payouts for that particular hand. The indicator is randomly

4   activated from hand to hand so that the payouts for certain

5   winning combinations are changed constantly.

6   One way to indicate to the player which payouts are

7   being used for that hand is to use colors as the indicator.

8   For example, the cards used in video poker can be designated

9   with colors, such as red, white or blue, that correspond to

10   different payouts for different winning hand combinations.

11   When the cards are initially dealt, the back of the cards or

12   the border area of the cards can have a distinct color which

13   is associated with a particular pay table.

14

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

15

16   The present invention can be applied to any form of

17   video poker including both single hand video poker and

18   multiple hand video poker.

19   In the present invention as applied to single hand

1   poker, a player makes a wager to be able to play a hand of

2   cards.

3   At the time the cards are dealt (or prior to the deal of

4   the cards), a randomized selector is activated to determine

5   which of two or more pay tables will be used for that round

6   of play.   In the preferred embodiment of the present

7   invention, one of three pay tables will be selected.   Each

8   pay table has a different theoretical game return.   For

9   example, BLUE Table 1 can be used that has a theoretical game

10 return of 96.15%:

11

DRAW POKER	NUMBER OF COINS BET				
POKER HAND	1	2	3	4	5
ROYAL FLUSH	800	1600	2400	3200	4000
STRAIGHT FLUSH	50	100	150	200	250
FOUR-OF-A-KIND	25	50	75	100	125
FULL HOUSE	7	14	21	28	35
FLUSH	5	10	15	20	25
STRAIGHT	4	8	12	16	20
THREE-OF-A-KIND	3	6	9	12	15
TWO PAIR	2	4	6	8	10
JACKS OR BETTER	1	2	3	4	5

12

13   BLUE Table 1.

14   WHITE Table 2 can be used that has a theoretical game

15   return of 104.89%:

7

DRAW POKER	NUMBER OF COINS BET				
POKER HAND	1	2	3	4	5
ROYAL FLUSH	1600	3200	4800	6400	8000
STRAIGHT FLUSH	100	200	300	400	500
FOUR-OF-A-KIND	50	100	150	200	250
FULL HOUSE	7	14	21	28	35
FLUSH	5	10	15	20	25
STRAIGHT	4	8	12	16	20
THREE-OF-A-KIND	3	6	9	12	15
TWO PAIR	2	4	6	8	10
JACKS OR BETTER	1	2	3	4	5

1

2   WHITE Table 2.

3   RED Table 3 can be used that has a theoretical game

4   return of 113.86%:

DRAW POKER	NUMBER OF COINS BET				
POKER HAND	1	2	3	4	5
ROYAL FLUSH	2400	4800	7200	9600	12000
STRAIGHT FLUSH	150	300	450	600	750
FOUR-OF-A-KIND	75	150	225	300	375
FULL HOUSE	8	16	24	32	40
FLUSH	5	10	15	20	25
STRAIGHT	4	8	12	16	20
THREE-OF-A-KIND	3	6	9	12	15
TWO PAIR	2	4	6	8	10
JACKS OR BETTER	1	2	3	4	5

5

6   RED Table 3.

7   Any suitable pay tables may be used and each pay table

8   can have any suitable theoretical game return.

9   The randomized selector will select one of either the

8

BLUE, WHITE or RED pay tables to be used during the round of play. Any suitable manner of randomly selecting one of the pay tables can be used. In one example, the backs of the playing cards and/or the borders of the playing cards are provided with a suitable coloring of either blue, white or red. The color is then associated with the appropriate pay table. When the cards are dealt, the computer controls randomly select one of the colors which is then associated with the playing cards dealt to the player to indicate which pay table is being used for that round of play.

Another way of randomly selecting the colors would be to use a hopper filled with different colored balls from which is selected the color to be used in that round of play. Since the video poker machine uses a video display to show the playing of the game, the player can be presented with a video display of a hopper from which the colored ball is selected.

Any desirable manner of displaying the color selection to the player can be done either at the time the cards are dealt or prior to the deal of the cards. Alternatively, the

1 color could also be selected after the deal of the cards, but

2 before the player begins the actual play of the hand by

3 selecting which cards to hold.

4   The colors can be distributed in any weighed grouping so

5 that the overall game return is maintained at an acceptable

6 level for the operator of the gaming establishment.   For

7 example, with reference to the BLUE, WHITE and RED pay tables

8 shown above, the color distribution can be 21 BLUE, 6 WHITE

9 and 3 RED.   Based on the individuals game returns shown

10 above, this color distribution would yield an overall game

11 return of 99.61%.   Any suitable overall game return can be

12 used.

13   After the color has been selected, the play continues as

14 in conventional video poker, the player is dealt five cards

15 face up (unless the cards have already been dealt).   These

16 first five cards are the player's initial hand or starting

17 hand.

18   The player selects which cards, if any, the player

19 wishes to hold from his initial hand.   The unheld cards are

20 discarded and replacement cards are dealt for the discarded

1   cards. The final five card hand is analyzed to determine its

2   poker hand ranking and the player is paid for winning poker

3   hand rankings based on the amount of the player's wager. Any

4   winning poker hand combination is paid to the player in

5   accordance with the pay table associated with the color

6   selected.

7   The method of the present invention can also be applied

8   to multiple hand poker games. U.S. Patent No. 5,823,873

9   (Moody) (the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by

10 this reference) describes TRIPLE PLAY DRAW POKER® which is an

11 electronic video gaming machine and method in which the

12 player may play multiple hands at the same time.   In the

13 most successful commercial version of TRIPLE PLAY DRAW

14 POKER®, the player makes a wager for each of three separate

15 hands to be played by the player. One hand of five cards is

16 dealt all face up. The player selects none, one or more of

17 the face up cards from the first hand as cards to be held.

18 The cards that are held are reused from the first hand into

19 all of the other hands. Replacement cards for the non-

20 selected cards are dealt into the first hand and additional

1 cards are then dealt to the first hand, if needed, so that

2 the first hand has five cards. Additional cards are also

3 dealt to all of the other hands so that each hand is a five

4 card hand. The poker hand ranking of each five card hand is

5 determined row by row. The player is then paid for any

6 winning poker hands based on a pay table and the amount of

7 the player's wager.

8 At the beginning of each round of a multiple hand poker

9 game, the player selects the number of hands the player

10 wishes to play. A color is then randomly selected for that

11 round of play. Whatever color is selected can be used with

12 all of the multiple hands to be played by the player.

13 Alternatively, each of the multiple hands to be played

14 by the player can have its own color randomly selected and

15 associated therewith. The mathematical game return is the

16 same whether a single color is associated with all hands or

17 if each hand has its own randomly selected color.

18 While the pay tables shown above are based on regular

19 Draw Poker format, the present invention can also be used

20 with other pay tables for the other variations of draw poker,

1 such as Deuces Wild Poker, Bonus Poker, Double Bonus Poker,

2 Double Double Bonus Poker, Triple Bonus Poker, Joker's Wild

3 Poker or any of the myriad of video poker formats that have

4 been developed.   Each of these video poker formats uses

5 various arrangements of poker hand rankings as winning

6 combinations and they use various payout amounts for the

7 poker hand rankings.   The method of the present invention

8 can be applied to any of the various video poker formats

9 discussed above.

10   While the invention has been illustrated with respect to

11 several specific embodiments thereof, these embodiments

12 should be considered as illustrative rather than limiting.

13 Various modifications and additions may be made and will be

14 apparent to those skilled in the art. Accordingly, the

15 invention should not be limited by the foregoing description,

16 but rather should be defined only by the following claims.